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Montana. Fish and Game Commission
Biennial Report

1923-1925

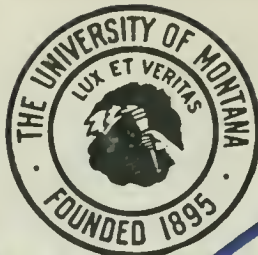
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MONTANA FISH AND
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The Clown of the Hills

Letter of Transmittal

His Excellency J. E. Erickson,
Governor of Montana,
Helena, Montana.

Dear Sir:

As required by law your Fish and Game Commission desires to submit the following report of its work from January 1st, 1923, to January 1st, 1925.

THOMAS N. MARLOWE, Chairman,
E. T. RICHARDS, Commissioner,
JOSEPH L. KELLY, Commissioner,
HENRY C. CRIPPEN, Commissioner,
E. A. WILSON, Commissioner.

C. A. JAKWAYS, Secretary
State Game Warden



Six Point Bull Elk

83541

Report of the State Game Warden

The closing of the biennium of 1923 and 1924 shows the rounding out and completion of a considerable part of the program undertaken in 1921. It has been the declared policy of our department to build a number of small hatcheries throughout the State, believing that the reduced cost of distribution would compensate for the additional cost of operation. The Great Falls station is now complete with caretaker's residence, auxiliary pumping plant and rearing ponds. Lewistown, Red Lodge and Big Timber stations are also complete and operating very successfully. The Ovando station has a complete pond system and has the water piped to the hatchery which has cleared the water of all plant growth and one man operates this station easily. A system of feeding ponds has been built at Missoula which equips this station for serving all of western and southwestern Montana in a most satisfactory manner. One of the most notable changes for the better is at Anaconda. This hatchery is one of our largest. It has been newly painted and fully repaired. Heretofore the water at this station has been too cold for average development of eggs and growth of fish, 44° being the regular temperature. During the fall of 1924 we found a warm spring which was piped into the supply pipe at this station and the mean temperature of this spring being 57°, it is now easy to maintain the temperature at the hatchery troughs at any desired point between 44° and 52° which makes for a saving of more than two weeks time in the hatching of the eggs and promotes a much more rapid growth of the young fish. Warm water is favorable to plant growth and consequent development of laravæ and the resulting bugs and worms to support fish life. The Hamilton hatchery which was turned over to the Department by Marcus Daly in 1922 has been operated successfully this year. This is an 80 trough plant, the largest in the State. The Somers hatchery has been repainted and is in excellent shape. Pipe has been laid at Lake Ronan to replace the open flume which has heretofore supplied the water at this station.

The Flint Creek spawning station has been rebuilt by removing the old pole traps and installing concrete walls. The old walls were badly rotted and were washing out the banks of Flint Creek. This wonderful station which produced twenty-five million game fish eggs in 1924 is now in shape for maximum efficiency in 1925. At Ashley Lake, in Flathead County, modern traps have been installed in four of the streams entering this lake and a house has been built over the eyeing station. It is expected that four million pure native eggs will be secured at this station in 1925. Plans have been perfected to work Lake Francis for Rainbow and Cliff Lake for Natives in 1925.

I was able to make an exchange with the State of Oregon, which will keep our native eggs in Montana and secure for us such steelhead or sea-run Rainbow as we want. The Oregon Commission is willing to take Grayling and Loch Leven instead of our Native Black Spotted eggs in exchange. An exchange has been effected with the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries whereby we give the Bureau three million Grayling eggs for three million Loch Leven eggs. Two million of the Loch Leven eggs will be traded to Oregon for Rainbow and one million are being hatched at the Great Falls station to be liberated in the Missouri River. It is being shown that the Missouri River between Logan and Great Falls is becoming a rival of the Madison as a Loch Leven and Rainbow stream.

It has developed that Nelson Reservoir in Phillips County contains great numbers of Great Northern or Wall-eyed Pike and also great numbers of Carp. In the winter of 1923-24 eleven carloads of Carp were shipped to New York from Malta. It occurred to me that this Department was entitled to some royalty on these fish and in 1924 a contract was made whereby we will receive 15% of the gross output of Carp which should bring us around \$2,000.00 annually.

It is hoped that we can make a start this year on Pike Perch propagation by taking spawn at Nelson Reservoir and stock the lower Missouri and lower Yellowstone with this excellent food fish.

The Commission has selected Mr. J. W. Schofield as Field Assistant for the Eastern Division and Dr. I. H. Treece in the same capacity in the Western Division. Their excellent work has shown an increase of six million fish planted in 1924 as compared with 1923. We have had good teamwork from every hatchery and each hatchery foreman and every man in the work has not only expressed the wish to make good, but their work shows that they have made good.

The years 1923 and 1924 marked increased importation of Hungarian Partridges from Europe and this bird is now a proven success in Montana. They are increasing very rapidly in all parts of the State.

There can be no question but that the Buck Law has increased our deer. The season of 1924 has brought reports of increase in deer all over the State. The elk are more than holding their own and excellent hunting for this animal is found in many parts of the State. The creation of the Spotted Bear Game Preserve on the west side of the Continental Divide, opposite the Sun River Game Preserve on the east side, has been the means of bringing about a considerable drift of elk from the Sun River side, where there was an over supply of elk for the amount of forage existing, to the South Fork of the Flathead where the Spotted Bear Preserve pro-



Fish Hatchery at Red Lodge—One of the Smaller Stations

fects them and where an abundance of forage exists for many times the number of elk there now.

I believe we could safely permit the hunting of one goat and one mountain sheep per person on that part of Lewis and Clark and Powell counties, which are drained by the South Fork of the Flathead and the north fork of the Blackfoot river, outside the Game Preserves.

The protection of fur-bearing animals is a subject which this Department should take up at once. Marten are nearly extinct and should have a five year closed season. Muskrats have increased greatly during a two year closed season and I believe trapping of muskrats should be permitted between February 15th and April 1st with a provision that their houses must not be broken into or destroyed. I believe the State should receive a royalty on the skins taken from fur-bearing animals not predatory.

Continued co-operation with the Livestock Commission and the U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey has resulted in the destruction of thousands of coyotes, wolves, mountain lions and other stock and game destroying animals. The sale of skins taken from these animals has added materially to the Fish and Game Fund and a personnel of trained men is being built up which is rapidly increasing in efficiency.

The very fine co-operation which we have had from Montana's sportsmen in general has made our progress possible. The Forest Service, National Park Service and other governmental agencies have been of great value to this Department's program and have given real help in carrying it out.

The beginning of 1925 finds the Department of Fish and Game better equipped, both in its financial condition and its physical plant, than ever before for the carrying on of the great work of conserving the wild life of Montana for the pleasure and benefit of our present and coming generations.

Respectfully yours,

C. A. JAKWAYS,
State Game Warden.

Secretary State Fish and Game Commission.
December 22, 1924.



Big Horn Mountain Sheep

A Word from a Former Commissioner

Mr. C. A. Jakways,
State Game Warden,
Helena, Montana.

Dear Sir:

During the last two seasons there has been an improvement in the game bird situation in this (western) part of the State. Reports from every part of this section are favorable, in some instances farmers reporting that grouse are often seen in winter feeding with the domestic fowl in barnyards. There naturally would be found a wide difference of opinion among those who find the wild birds feeding with the tame ones, but on the whole, sentiment seems to be favorable. Many take pride in having the wild birds around and make especial efforts to protect, feed and shelter them.

In this connection it might be wise to provide in some way for setting apart, on the request of the owner or owners of a farm, or a locality embracing a number of farms where hunting could be forbidden even during the open season. This plan has been suggested by Mr. Ben Plummer of Stevensville who owns a large farm near the town, and on whose place many of the birds find winter shelter and are fed. A plan of this kind would undoubtedly improve hunting in all of the surrounding open country.

It is my observation that fishing conditions are fairly good in most parts of the State and in some places the best in the world. The extreme low water of last summer caused some disappointments to the anglers, for in many instances the larger fish were not found in the usual places, and in some cases not in the smaller streams at all.

* Your efforts to interest the fishermen, to have them take out licenses, and to help in stocking of streams has been wonderfully successful about here. It has occurred to me that while the plan adopted of raising the trout fry in ponds until they reach fingerling size is a good one, there may be other reasons or causes which work against the efforts at restocking, especially with native trout. As a rule the native trout spawn at the age of three years; it is pretty well known and has been shown in many plantings made in lakes and streams and under favorable conditions that at the end of the first year the fry will have grown to a length of approximately six inches and in two years to a length of nine inches, and after that time may reach a length of twelve or more inches in the third year.

Is it not probable that many of the native trout planted by your department are caught before they reach the spawning age? If so, your department is working at a disadvantage; the fisherman has all the best of the game.

It will be urged, with some truth and justice that native trout are caught containing spawn that are not more than six inches in length. This is true, but in such cases the trout are three years of age and the small size of the fish must be accounted for by the fact that it has grown in a small stream, on an inadequate food supply and with only small waters to swim in.

I am not offering the above as an absolute fact, but simply as one solution of the problem of stream stocking and with the hope that more light may be thrown upon your work. It has seemed to me that your department has shown most commendable effort and enthusiasm, and the results are as satisfactory as could be expected. We have such a vast territory to cover, so many good streams and rivers to stock and fish, so many automobiles to take the many hunters and fishermen to the right place, it is no wonder that some of the old timers take to the old way of going off the beaten trail, seek remote streams or lakes and there find "hearts desire."

With the coming of easy transportation remote streams are within reach. Time is saved in going and coming, more time is found for fishing and the inquiry has often been made, "Are not the nearer streams better fishing than those more remote?"

Yours very truly,

W. M. BICKFORD.



Just a Few Ducks

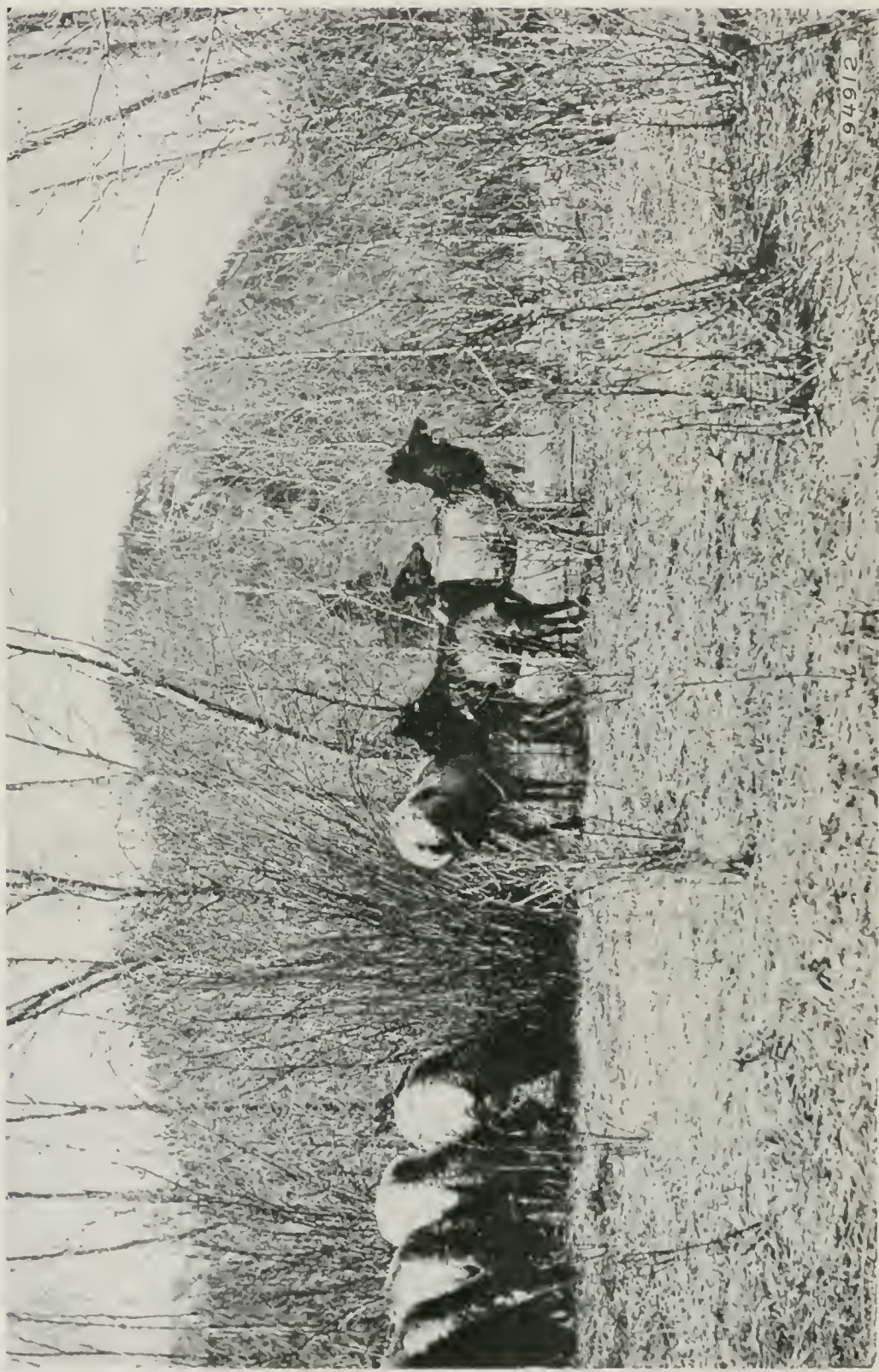
Big Game on the National Forests

By FRED MORRELL

District Forester, U. S. Forest Service

There are 15,881,000 acres of Government-owned land within the boundaries of the National Forest in Montana. The greater part of the big game summer range of the state and much of the winter range is found within these areas. Estimates of the amount of game within large areas of wild land can, of course, only be very rough ones but those given out by the Forest Service are made up by the rangers who spend their time working over their districts and making as close observations and tallies as possible, including winter counts. No accuracy is claimed for the following figures, but they are at least the best that are available. The last annual game report of the Forest Service shows the following numbers of big game within the National Forests of the State: 985 moose, 8400 elk, 50,000 deer, 680 antelope, 1875 mountain sheep, 2480 mountain goats and 20 caribou.

Since the National Forests were first put under administration it has been the policy of the Forest Service to aid in all practical ways the conservation of wild life within them. Co-operation with state officials, game associations and other agencies has been the keynote of this policy. Practically all Forest officers are commissioned by the state game warden as deputies and are instructed to report and prosecute game and fish law violations to the same extent that they execute their other duties under United States laws and departmental regulations. Study of game conditions, including such things as adaptability of ranges to classes of game, seasonal condition of game, increase and decrease in game herds, loss from predatory animals and other destroying agencies, the division of range between game and domestic stock, the dual use of range by game and stock, the carrying capacities of game ranges, and many other game problems of similar nature, is a part of the regular job of Forest Service employees. These studies are all summarized in an annual report from each man and are used as the basis for building up a game management plan for each of the National Forests. This work is done from the standpoint of Uncle Sam as a property owner who desires that his land shall be so managed as to render the highest possible returns to the community in which it is located, and to the nation as a whole. As a principle of government the writer is a firm believer in state ownership and control of wild game. He believes that so far as it is possible to do so game matters within the National Forests of Montana should be administered in the way that the people of Montana want them administered, and that the way for the sportsmen of Montana to express their wishes is through their state and local sportsmen's



A Bunch of Cow Elk, Our Greatest Game Animal

associations. That has been and will continue to be the policy of the Forest Service. Our plan is predicated on the assumption of intelligent state game laws, a wise and consistent state game policy and a fair and competent state administration of game affairs. We believe that the amendment to Montana's laws, passed by the legislature four years ago, establishing the State Game Commission was a splendid achievement and that the progress made in game matters since that time constitutes sufficient evidence for proof of this statement. The work has not been and never will all be done, but a good start has been made, and there is a growing sympathy and understanding between all interested agencies. The great need now is for a general recognition among the sportsmen of the state that game propagation and conservation is not merely a question of law enforcement, but one of biology and economics,—intricate and far-reaching, that cannot be solved by rule of thumb, or by opinion based on meagre knowledge of only a few of the facts. If we are going to progress as we should, there must be a more general recognition that accurate and scientific knowledge of all facts are just as applicable in administration of game matters as they are in the handling of any other complicated business, and that the opinion of the sportsman who has not made a study of the biological and economical conditions on the question of perpetuating Montana's wild life is worth just as much and no more than that of the average layman on how to build and fly an airship. To the extent that this fact is recognized by the sportsmen of the state they will see to it that provision is made for carrying on the work.

An always live question with the Forest Service is that of adjusting the demands for range from livestock owners with conflicting needs of game. Six hundred twenty-eight thousand, one hundred and twenty three sheep and goats and 163,463 horses and cattle feed during a portion of each year on the National Forest ranges of the state. Livestock are grazed on all areas which they can use except where grazing would interfere with forest production or other higher use, and except on areas withdrawn from use by domestic stock to provide game ranges. There is a total of 7,592,304 acres of usable range in the National Forests of the state. Two million, six hundred twenty-one thousands, five hundred and ten acres of National Forest land are reserved for use of game. The larger portion of this area is not in demand from stockmen because of its inaccessibility but there is a considerable portion of it that would be so used were stock allowed on it. There is, of course, a great deal of grazing of game on areas used by domestic stock and this dual use can and should be continued. There are a few extremists amongst the sportsmen who believe that grazing of domestic stock on the National Forests should not be allowed and that all ranges should be used for game. These are people who fail to appreciate the economic value of National Forest ranges. Twenty-five per cent of the sheep in the state and fifteen per cent of the cattle graze for a portion of the year on the National Forests. Their elimination from the National Forests would mean the elimination of a large percentage of them from the state entirely, and the abandoning or deterioration of a great many ranch properties because owners could not continue in the stock business without summer range. Most of these critics say that the United States could afford to do without the grazing fees. Perhaps it could, but that is a minor consideration. The big question is could Montana afford to do without the stock industry that is dependent on summer range

in the National Forests? The writer does not believe it could and does not think that any considerable percentage of Montana citizens believe it could. The present grazing policy on the National Forests is not one incompatible with large increase in numbers of game animals, and it is believed that the present plan of making such adjustments as seem best after consultation with sportsmen, stockmen (a large percentage of whom are sportsmen also), state officials and other interested and informed citizens should continue. Its continuance means that much study must be given to the question and in that study the Forest Service seeks the assistance of all people who are informed on the subject.



White Tailed Deer

Educational Progress

Work in the Educational and Biological branch of the Fish and Game Department has made measurable progress during the two years covered by this report. Just what that progress has been is difficult to determine, as it is rather of a perplexing problem to measure educational progress. The same system one would use in measuring the progress being made in fish and game production would yield no intelligent results if applied to educational progress.

Advancement in education is marked by the gradual improvement of standards, by the adoption of more modern and efficient methods, by the recognition of true values, and by a seeking after a more thorough knowledge of facts.

Looking for educational progress made during the last two years in matters in which those who read this report are keenly interested, it is not too difficult to discern a very marked improvement, gradual as it has been, in the standard of sportsmanship in Montana. Many, many people who were living their lives without thought or interest in the affairs of the Montana Fish and Game Department, further than to secure the greatest possible returns for the money paid for their hunting and fishing licenses, are now giving time, constructive thought and service to the sportsmen's program. When, as occurred during the recent open season on deer, in a locality where deer of any age or sex may be killed, 360 hunters bring in bucks and only 140 out of 500 kill does or fawns, it indicates not only a higher standard of sportsmanship, but also a willingness to adopt proven game management methods. A few clubs have constructed rearing ponds tributary to streams they wish to stock and have been liberating young fish that were from five to seven inches in length, adopting a method of fish planting that appears to be on the road to general adoption because of its economy and efficiency. Plans are being worked out for a state-wide and effective system of small game refuges, consideration being given to their proper relation to hunting areas, as being a more practical and constructive method of game management than the continual reduction of bag limits and open seasons, which is but a clumsy system of fleecing the sportsmen.

It is believed by those most closely in touch with the work that there has been a greater recognition of the real value of the sportsmen's program to the various other interests in Montana during the past few months than at any previous period, a measure of which is traceable directly to the work done at Montana fairs in September and October, 1924. The value of this educational work and the necessity for its further progress is being realized more and more in this state.

Perhaps no one thing marks the educational advancement being made by the sportsmen of Montana more than the desire, so generally manifested, to acquire a true knowledge of all the facts pertinent to efficient game management. This is noted by such activities as game surveys, water surveys, elk reconnaissance, and the action taken by the Commission looking to the employment of a highly qualified biologist for the Fish and Game Department. Many other indications of educational progress might be enumerated here, but space does not justify nor necessity demand.

It may be well in this connection to sound a warning against the discouragements incident to the dead levels of attainment in educational progress, those periods when, regardless of the time, energy and effort put forth, no apparent progress is made, and we are inclined to feel that we are wasting our efforts along these lines. But the history of these dead level periods reveals them as times of accumulation, unification and crystallization of sentiment, which later springs forth and attains a momentum that carries the educational program onward and upward to new levels of accomplishment. So let us welcome these dead level periods and make the most of them by being energetic and persistent in our work along educational lines.

Because of a decided shortage of funds this last year, there has not been the personal contact with the clubs to the extent that prevailed in former years, though visits have been made in sections of the state not formerly visited. This is an important phase of the educational work and one which can be made to yield splendid benefits to the local organizations.

As we are about to enter upon the third biennial period since the adoption of more modern methods of administering the affairs of the sportsmen's department, there is apparently a growing sentiment favoring a very material increase in the educational work of the department. Serious consideration is being given plans, which, if carried out, will place the sportsmen's educational work in Montana on a par with the most progressive work now being done along these lines. The need is urgent; the field in Montana is unlimited; our resources are adequate for an intensive and extensive program; the benefits to be derived are immeasurable.

M. S. CARPENTER,
Secy. State Sportsmans Association.



Richardson or "Blue" Grouse

Predatory Animal Work

Twenty-five cents of every hunting and fishing license fee is placed in a separate fund to be used to employ hunters and trappers to kill predatory animals. The destruction of these animals removes the greatest menace to our game animals and birds for there is no doubt that more game is killed by these animals than by all the hunters combined. These night prowlers know no season, sex or limit and their removal contributes to the saving of game enormously, as well as being a great benefit to the farmers and stockmen. The co-operative trappers of this department, the Livestock Commission and Biological Survey killed the following list of these animals in 1924:

4,080 coyotes	73 wolves
111 bobcats	68 badgers
71 skunks	1 mink
7 weasels	1 ferret
488 porcupines	12 mountain lions
4 lynx	29 bear

Any additional revenue received by this Department will make greater operations against these public enemies possible.

68570



Cabin of State Trapper E. B. Warren in the Big Belt mountains near Lingshire, showing a portion of the pelts of his winter's catch of coyotes with a big bear skin in the center.



Three Hundred miles through the mountains in the dead of winter might have been an ordinary jaunt for the fur trappers of the early part of the nineteenth century, but such a trip in these days of railroads and automobiles is, to say the least, rather unusual. Such a trip was made during the winter of 1923-24 by one of the regularly employed hunters and trappers of the State Fish and Game Commission, C. E. Beebe, of Columbia Falls.

Three hundred miles, mostly on foot, a large portion of it covered on snow shoes with a faithful dog pulling a sled carrying his bedding and provisions, was a trip taken by Hunter Beebe last winter.

The bulk of this journey lay in the valley of the South Fork of the Flathead river, and through the Clearwater and Swan river valleys, a great portion of which is entirely devoid of settlements, a rough, mountainous and heavily timbered country.

Predatory Bird and Animal Drives

There is no better way to propagate game animals or game birds than by destroying the predatory animals and predatory birds that live upon them. Realizing this to be a fact, the State Fish and Game Commission at one of its meetings held in the spring of 1924 set aside the sum of \$500.00 of the sportsmen's money to be paid in prizes to the rod and gun club organizations destroying the largest number of predatory animals and birds during the year 1924. Mr. M. S. Carpenter, the Secretary of the State Sportsmen's Association, was designated as the person to have charge of these contests and points were offered for each predatory animal and bird destroyed and also for the eggs of certain of the predatory birds.

Quite a number of the rod and gun clubs of the state participated in this drive. It is to be regretted that all of the clubs putting on these drives did not make reports, even though the reports showed their particular club would not be entitled to any of the prize money, for it would be a source of valuable information to the sportsmen to know just how many predatory animals and birds were killed on account of this drive. Only ten clubs filed their reports and two of them filed reports too late to be counted in the contest, for, according to the rules laid down by Mr. Carpenter, who had charge of the drive, the reports were required to be in by November 25th. But even though few of the clubs reported as to their activities under this drive, it will, I am sure, be interesting to the sportsmen of the state to know the results accomplished.

Compilation of these reports show the following number of predatory birds and animals killed:

Mountain Lion	1	Bobcat	2
Coyote	232	Weasel	217
Lynx	6	Wood Chucks	169
Badger	6	Gopher	23287
Hawks	783	Hawk's Eggs	142
Great Horned Owl	211	Great Horned Owl Eggs.....	232
Magpies	12927	Crow Eggs	3618
Crow	1168	Magpie Eggs	18076
Kingfisher	25		

It is certain that had all the other clubs reported, this number would have been increased by at least one third. The number of game animals and especially game birds taken by these predatory birds and animals during a year is considerable and it is certain that a large number of our game birds have been saved for propagation purposes by putting on this campaign.

We do not believe that any like sum of the sportsmen's money has ever been spent to a greater advantage than this \$500.00 was spent and believe it would be a great thing to repeat this contest in the years to come.

The Big Timber Rod and Gun Club was the heavy winner in the contest, the members of this club having killed 158 coyotes, 2 lynx, 17 weasels, 2788 gophers, 316 hawks, 75 great horned owls, 3420 magpies, 1145 crows and destroyed 66 hawk eggs, 145 great horned owl eggs, 5221 magpie eggs and 1692 crow eggs.



"The Limit"—Caught on the Madison

More Fish and Game

By THOMAS N. MARLOWE, Chairman,
Montana Fish and Game Commission.

To the sportsmen of Montana nature has been kind indeed. Those who came here a score or more years ago, found a veritable sportsmen's paradise. In those days the lordly elk roamed supreme in our forests. Deer were so plentiful the legal limit was 6 of either sex. God only knows the illegal limit. Upon our rocky cliffs the mountain goat and big horn sheep were on every hand. Black, brown and grizzly bear, were in goodly numbers. Grouse of every variety were found in profusion on our wooded hillsides and creek bottoms, with thousands of sagehens and prairie chickens on the foothills and prairies. Ducks of all kinds and the old Canadian Honker filled our lakes, ponds and pot holes, and in our crystal lakes and sparkling streams the gamy trout rose eagerly to take the tempting lure of the angler.

A game warden who tried to protect the fish and game in those days was the most despised person on earth. The possibility of this vast resource having any particular economic value was never thought of. Its value, if any, was only sentimental. No one seemed to want the fish and game protected. Game wardens themselves were imbued with this idea and very few did anything at all toward protecting it. The supply was so plentiful, no one dreamed it would even diminish, let alone disappear. We had not learned the lesson we should have learned from the extermination of the wild pigeon, the buffalo and the antelope. The fact that fish and game was so plentiful, so easy to take, was possibly the very reason why we were so wasteful. But wasteful we were, and to a shameful degree.

Much fish and game were taken in those days, not so much because it was needed, but simply for a seemingly ever-present desire to kill and to destroy. Nor have we later-day sportsmen improved the situation to any great extent. There is a broad streak of vandalism in our race, which simply defies competition and instead of taming with the times, we are each year growing more and more efficiently fierce in the taking of fish and game, with our tempting lures and tackles, our high powered rifles, our shotguns of pump and automatic construction.

Not only this, but in the last 10 or 15 years, there has come into common use an agency of wild life destruction which to my mind is more deadly than the gun of the hunter or the tackle of the fisherman. As we know, the automobile has placed almost every fishing water and hunting ground at the very back door of that ever increasing army of hunters and fishermen. On this account, the fisherman and hunter of today put in more days and more hours per day hunting and fishing than heretofore. His car enables him within a few hours to reach places heretofore inaccessible. These heretofore inaccessible places formerly acted as fish and game preserves and sanctuaries, so to speak, and the overflow from them stocked up the accessible hunting and fishing grounds. But now, on account of the auto, there are no inaccessible places. The inaccessible have become the hunting and fishing grounds of today and we have no overflow from any source.



White Tailed Buck

There is no use "kidding" ourselves about the matter, we have reached the point where our supply of fish and game is on the downward trend, and it is up to us to do something. But, you ask, what can we do about it? The automobile and the desire to take fish and game are here to stay. They are a part and parcel of our everyday life. There is only one thing we can do, and that is to meet the situation face to face, as an existing and continuing fact, and produce more fish and more game to supply this increasing demand.

Therefore, to those of us who are interested in this question, the problem of the hour is how to produce more fish and game to satisfy the increasing demand for it. I have heard some of the old-time fish and game hogs of the state say, "The fish and game are gone and can't be brought back". True, they are gone; gone to an extent largely because of their unwise activities in the past, and perhaps they cannot be brought back to the point where these butchers can again slaughter it as they have. But I do not share their belief that we cannot always have, in this wonderful state, sufficient fish and game to satisfy any reasonable sportsman.

Of course, I will admit, the matter of keeping this state stocked with fish and game, is a man-sized job, and one which will permit no lagging, but to me the future looks encouraging.

One of the reasons why I feel so hopeful, is the expression of interest, the desire to co-operate so manifest on the part of the sportsmen, themselves. Everywhere sportsmen are organizing clubs, many



Franklin Grouse or "Fool Hen"



Two Gray Wolves

of them are being organized under the able leadership of the efficient secretary of the State Sportmen's Association. The sportsmen are everywhere helping in the work of propagating more fish by assisting in distributing the fry. They are helping in the propagation of game by destroying the predatory animals and birds that prey upon the game. They are helping in the propagation of both fish and game by assisting their game wardens in cutting out violations of the laws enacted to protect fish and game. All of this spells but one thing, more fish and more game.

In Montana with her hundreds of square miles of giant forests, rugged mountains, sheltered valleys, rolling prairies, hundreds of deep cold crystal lakes, and thousands of miles of the finest fishing water in any country, is the finest habitat in the world for fish and game, and the encouraging feature of it to the sportsman, is that many of these vast spaces will never be fit for any other purpose.

With the brood stock we still have, and that which we can easily acquire, with which to stock this habitat, we can have a future supply of fish and game and make it all our heart's desire, if we will simply take care of it as we should, and give it a fair chance.

But if our future supply of fish and game is to be all we want it to be, we will have to see to it that it is given a fair deal—in fact a fairer deal than it has had in the past. The greatest trouble with our present supply of fish and game is that we have never given it a square deal.

Our supply of fish will not increase so long as we have men who think it is their right to catch them when they are nearly bursting with spawn; our supply of deer can never increase so long as we have in this state, men so mean as to kill mother deer with unborn fawn within them; nor will our supply of ducks and game birds ever increase, so long as we can find men who insist upon killing them the year around, for, with today's great army of sportsmen in the field, neither the fish nor the game can survive the results of the legitimate hunting and fishing and that which is illegitimate as well.

Continued violations of our fish and game laws can ultimately mean but one thing, to-wit: No fish and no game.

But conditions are getting better right along, thanks to the activity of both sportsmen and game wardens. The standards of sportsmanship have improved several hundred per cent in the last five years. There are fewer game violations now than ever before, and a greater majority of those who do violate the law are being apprehended, because real sportsmen no longer wink at game violations, even though committed by their best friends. They realize that if their sport is to continue, these things must stop. They are willing to help their game wardens in securing convictions by giving information which leads to the arrest and conviction of violators. And this is as it should be. Real sportsmen should have such a zealous regard for their sport and the continuation of it, as to practically enforce the game laws themselves.

But our wild life is never going to be wholly protected by law alone. The laws enacted for fish and game protection, the alertness and watchfulness of game officials, your money spent for these purposes will be largely in vain, unless we as sportsmen, create in the hearts and minds of men, a realization of the real necessity for fish and game protection. But once we create in the mind of those who



"Five Geese"

now violate the game laws, a realization of the necessity for these laws, our fish and game law violation will be reduced to a minimum, for men seldom violate a law when they once fully realize and appreciate the necessity for that law.

The idea I want to impress upon the sportsmen of this state is that the duty and the obligation of bringing this truth home to these game violators and making them see the matter in the light of true sportsmanship, rests with us as individuals. It is purely a matter of education.

But until that day comes, get behind your game wardens and give them every encouragement and support. Remember, he is your officer, employed and paid by you. He is making an honest effort to enforce your laws, to protect your fish and game, so as to make more and better hunting and fishing for you. Then let your County Attorney and Justice of the Peace know you are behind these laws, and that you want to see them enforced. They will not resent it, but on the other hand will welcome your support.

In this way we can materially increase our supply of fish and game by stopping the leaks in reproduction caused by game violations. This, however, is not the only means we must resort to. We must, in addition, adopt and carry out a well defined program of intensified propagation.

We now have 12 well equipped fish hatcheries in the state, Somers, Lake Ronan, Hamilton, Missoula, Ovando, Anaconda, Georgetown Lake, Emigrant, Big Timber, Red Lodge, Lewistown and Great



Ptarmigan or White Grouse



Young Moose

Falls. These, in my opinion, are sufficient to hatch all the trout and greyling we will ever require. We must do something, however, to produce warm water fishes to stock the waters in Eastern Montana. Your fish and game officials are doing everything possible to find and build up additional spawn taking fields, and are making progress along this line. In two or three years, we hope to be taking twice as many eggs as we are now taking.

We think we now have two or possibly three, workable fish wheels, which can be installed at a reasonable sum. Arrangements have already been made to try out a number of them the coming season. If they are found to be what we think they are, it will be one of the greatest things that ever happened for the propagation of game fish, for it is my opinion that more game fish are destroyed in irrigation ditches than are taken by the anglers.

All our fish should be kept in rearing ponds until they have reached the fingerling stage and no fry should be planted at all. More attention will have to be given to the manner in which our fish are planted and the places where they are planted. Every trout stream in the state should be surveyed, and all the good places to plant fish marked by a permanent marker of some kind. When the fish are planted, they should be taken there, and planted by experienced fish men who know how to plant fish, and who will take the time to do it in the right way. Many of the fish liberated in the past have been dumped instead of planted. The department should plant all the fish distributed so that the best results may be obtained.

More attention will have to be paid to game propagation than has been done in the past. A system of small game preserves should be established. The work of importing game birds should be kept up until they are so plentiful we can have an open season on them. Those we have imported are doing wonderfully well from the reports we have on them. If we cannot do anything to propagate our native game birds, we can at least help them propagate themselves, by destroying their natural enemies. Owls, certain kinds of hawks, crows, magpies, weasels and the like, destroy thousands of our game birds in a year. If we had the money, an appropriate bounty should be placed on all these, but we have not the money to do it with, so we must appeal to the sportsmen for help. The appeal we sent out last spring has been the means of thousands of these predatory birds being destroyed, which means thousands of your game and song birds have been saved.

We must not let up in the work already begun of destroying predatory animals, coyotes, mountain lion, wolves and the like, that prey on our game animals. These silent hunters are at work 365 days in the year, they know no sex or closed season and the toll of game they take in a year is enormous. We should, if possible, double our energies in destroying them, and in this way we win the respect of the farmer and the stockman, for they too, want these predatory animals killed.

I believe, however, the bear should be put on the list of game animals, and that he should be protected by a closed season during certain times of the year, when unfit for food or fur. The right, however, should be given to destroy him at any time and in any manner when it is shown that he is a killer of stock. The bear is fast disappearing. The average person gets a greater kick out of seeing a bear in the woods, than a whole herd of deer or elk. We must give him some protection before it is too late.



Calf Elk

Then, if we are to expect much real duck hunting in this state, we must do something to attract and hold the ducks here. We have some of the finest duck hunting waters in Montana to be found in any state in the union, but many of these waters are absolutely barren of duck food and contain no food for the ducks when they come down on their northern flights. The result is, they simply remain a few hours, get some needed rest and continue their journey southward. We must find some way of planting some kind of duck food in these waters, so as to hold the ducks here until the country freezes up in the fall of the year.

It is my opinion that we need a department of education. The standards of sportsmanship are raised by a better understanding of what we should and should not do. A higher standard of sportsmanship tells us we cannot violate the laws enacted for fish and game protection and expect to always have fish and game. A higher standard of sportsmanship tells us we must protect the farmers' rights if we are to be accorded the right to hunt and fish on his ground. A better understanding among the sportsmen can be had by the publication of a quarterly bulletin, which could be published and circulated by the department of education. Through the department of education the organization of sportsmen clubs could be carried on, and interest in our work kept up. This department could also supervise the carrying on of predatory bird and animal contests. It is also my opinion that we need a first class biologist to survey our fishing waters and determine what, if anything, could be done to increase the fish food life therein. This same biologist could examine our duck hunting waters and advise us the most suitable kind of duck food to plant therein.

These are some of the things we can do to make more and better hunting and fishing within this state. Of course, our income is limited and we have not the funds available to do all of these things, otherwise they would have been done before now. Let us hope that some day, ere it is too late, we will receive some added income so that these and other suggestions may be carried out.

Forest Service Co-operation and Law Enforcement

Forty-four cases of law violations were investigated by Forest Officers during the bi-ennium and a great deal of other valuable assistance has been given the Department by Forest Service Officials. Their help in properly posting the boundaries of Game Preserves, and taking game census has been invaluable.

Many of the cuts in this report were made from photographs furnished by the Forest Service.



Mule Deer

**The Records of This Office Show That 403 Arrests Were Made Between
Jan. 1st, 1923 and Jan. 1st, 1924, on Complaints as Follows:**

Alien in possession of firearms without a license.....	34
Catching over the limit of game fish.....	7
Catching more than 5 fish under 7 inches in length.....	6
Catching fish illegally.....	5
Capturing a moose.....	2
Conducting Taxidermist business without a license.....	1
Destroying evidence of sex of deer.....	2
Dumping refuse in stream.....	3
Fishing without a license.....	78
Fishing through the ice.....	3
Fishing within spawning grounds.....	4
Fishing in closed streams.....	6
Fishing during closed season.....	19
Guiding without a license.....	1
Having more than 5 grouse in possession.....	1
Hunting without a license.....	15
Hunting on Game Preserve.....	5
Killing a moose.....	1
Killing elk out of season.....	8
Killing deer out of season.....	11
Killing grouse out of season.....	12
Killing Hungarian Partridge.....	1
Killing ducks out of season.....	1
Killing doe deer.....	3
Killing deer with horns less than 4 inches in length.....	2
Killing deer in closed county.....	1
Killing more than one deer.....	2
Killing Mountain Sheep.....	1
Killing Antelope.....	2
Killing protected wild birds.....	3
Making false statement in application for a license.....	109
Possession of a seine without a license.....	1
Seining fish without a license.....	4
Selling game fish.....	3
Shipping furs from the State without a permit.....	2
Shipping fish from the State without a permit.....	1
Shooting ducks before half hour before sunrise.....	2
Shooting geese before half hour before sunrise.....	4
Shooting ducks after sunset.....	18
Trapping fur bearing animals out of season.....	8
Trapping fur bearing animals without a license.....	2
Trapping beaver without a license.....	9
Total	403



Calf Elk

These Complaints Were Instituted in the Following Counties:

Beaverhead	18
Blaine	9
Carbon	13
Cascade	7
Chouteau	4
Custer	3
Deer Lodge	16
Fergus	12
Flathead	16
Fallon	2
Gallatin	21
Granite	2
Glacier	2
Hill	1
Jefferson	3
Judith Basin	14
Lewis & Clark	7
Lincoln	25
Madison	21
Meagher	8
Missoula	4
Musselshell	13
Park	12
Phillips	1
Pondera	1
Powell	9
Ravalli	2
Sanders	6
Silver Bow	87
Stillwater	7
Sweetgrass	3
Teton	2
Valley	1
Yellowstone	49
Wheatland	2
Total	403

These Cases Were Disposed of as Follows:

Convictions	364
Acquittals	38
Pending	1
Total	403

Jail sentence	1
Fines Imposed	\$10,052.50



Spotted Fawn—Just Legs and Ears

The Records of This Office Show that 324 Arrests Were Made Between Jan. 1st, 1924, and Jan. 1st, 1925, on Complaints as Follows:

Alien in possession of firearms without a licence.....	18
Catching over the limit of game fish.....	9
Catching over the limit of game fish.....	9
Catching more than five fish under 7 inches in length.....	11
Catching fish illegally.....	8
Carrying firearms on Game Preserves.....	1
Dumping refuse in streams.....	2
Dynamiting fish.....	5
Destroying nests of wild birds.....	4
Fishing without a license.....	53
Fishing in closed streams.....	4
Fishing during closed season.....	12
Having more than five grouse in possession.....	1
Hunting without a license.....	9
Hunting on Game Preserves.....	5
Killing elk out of season.....	6
Killing deer out of season.....	22
Killing grouse out of season.....	14
Killing ducks out of season.....	4
Killing protected wild birds.....	8
Killing doe deer.....	6
Kiling deer with horns less than 4 inches long.....	1
Killing more than one deer.....	3
Killing Mountain Sheep.....	1
Making false statement in application for a license.....	37
Possession of a seine without a license.....	1
Seining fish without a license.....	6
Selling game fish.....	1
Shipping furs from the State without a permit.....	17
Shipping fish from the State without a permit.....	1
Shooting ducks after sunset.....	8
Shooting ducks before half hour before sunrise.....	9
Shooting game from a public highway.....	3
Shooting migratory birds from a power boat.....	1
Trapping bear.....	1
Trapping fur bearing animals out of season.....	15
Trapping fur bearing animals without a license.....	1
Trapping beaver without a license.....	20
Total	328

These Complaints Were Instituted in the Following Counties:

Beaverhead	16
Blaine	7
Carbon	5
Cascade	11
Chouteau	5
Custer	2
Dawson	1
Deer Lodge	21
Fergus	12
Flathead	28
Gallatin	14
Granite	1
Jefferson	2
Judith Basin	11
Lake	13
Lewis & Clark	12
Lincoln	17
Madison	21
Meagher	3
Mineral	3
Missoula	8
Musselshell	13
Park	6
Powder River	2
Powell	13
Ravalli	9
Roosevelt	1
Sanders	8

Sheridan	2
Silver Bow	19
Stillwater	2
Sweetgrass	1
Teton	2
Toole	1
Valley	2
Yellowstone	29
Wheatland	5
Total	328

These Cases Were Disposed of as Follows:

Convictions	300
Acquittals	23
Pending	5
Total	328

Jail sentence	2
Fines imposed	\$8,527.50

Egg Collections Made by the State Fish and Game Commission from Jan. 1st to Dec. 31st, 1924.

Flathead Lake	5,200	Sunfish
Flathead Lake	45,000	Black Bass
Ashley Lake	1,358,000	Black Spotted Trout
Flathead Lake	380,000	Whitefish
Bitterroot Lake	850,000	Black Spotted Trout
Bitterroot Lake	295,000	Rainbow Trout
Georgetown Lake	301,264	Rainbow Trout
Georgetown Lake	13,444,258	Black Spotted Trout
Georgetown Lake	13,294,972	Grayling
Georgetown Lake	1,358,420	Eastern Brook Trout
Lake Ronan	100,000	Grayling
Lake Ronan	723,534	Black Spotted Trout
Lake Ronan	970,404	Rainbow Trout
Lake Ronan	455,400	Eastern Brook Trout
Coopers' Lake	573,650	Black Spotted Trout
Yellowstone River	400,000	Whitefish
Yellowstone River	9,600	Loch Leven Trout

The fish planted were Eastern Brook, Grayling, Steelheads, Lock Leven, Bullheads, Black Bass, Sunfish, Catfish, Silver Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Native Trout, Rainbow Trout and Whitefish.

The State Fish and Game Commission is exchanging three million Grayling eggs to the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries for two million Loch Leven eggs—two million of which will go to the State of Oregon in exchange for salmon and steelheads in the spring. The remaining million Loch Leven eggs are in the Great Falls hatchery and will be liberated in Montana in the spring.

Eggs on Hand at State Fish Hatcheries Dec. 31st, 1924.

	Eastern Brook	Whitefish	Loch Leven
Anaconda	928,240	302,000	.....
Emigrant .....	.....	.....	9,600
Great Falls .....	.....	.....	987,070
Somers	400,000	.....	.....

**Fingerlings Planted in Montana by the State Fish and Game Commission
from Jan. 1st to Dec. 31st, 1923.**

Eastern Brook Trout	1,057,660
Rainbow Trout	2,923,870
Black Spotted Trout	6,358,265
Grayling	7,043,000
Lake Superior Whitefish	900,540
Chinook Salmon	291,410
Lake Trout	47,875
Bass	14,600
Sunfish Fry	5,000
Perch	400
Total	18,642,620

**Fingerlings Planted in Montana by the State Fish and Game Commission
from Jan. 1st to Dec. 31st, 1924.**

Eastern Brook Trout	698,064
Rainbow Trout	3,841,974
Black Spotted Trout	7,914,005
Steelheads	711,680
Grayling	8,254,000
Chinook Salmon	527,236
Silver Salmon	1,750,038
Loch Leven	650,401
Bullheads	57,000
Black Bass	48,400
Sunfish	5,300
Catfish	10,000
Whitefish	400,000
Total	24,871,098

**Fish Planted in Montana by the State Fish and Game Commission from
Jan. 1st to Dec. 31, 1924.**

Distribution as made by the different hatcheries:

Anaconda	9,611,680
Big Timber	1,574,001
Emigrant	2,628,640
Great Falls	1,637,892
Hamilton	1,240,400
Lewistown	1,136,502
Missoula	1,814,380
Ovando	623,260
Red Lodge	714,580
Ronan	418,239
Somers	2,316,524
Mal'ta (rescue work)	57,000
*Columbia Gardens	1,098,000
Total	24,871,098

*These eggs were furnished Columbia Gardens by the State Fish & Game Department.

Licenses, Permits and Tags Issued for Season of 1923.

64,202 Resident Citizen	@ \$ 2.00	\$128,404.00
2,193 Non-Resident Citizen Fishing	3.50	7,675.50
73 General Non-Resident Citizen	30.00	2,190.00
63 Limited Non-Resident Citizen	10.00	630.00
8 General Alien	50.00	400.00
257 Alien Fishing	10.00	2,570.00
		\$141,869.50

1,086	Shipping Permits	@ .50	543.00
50	Guides' Licenses	10.00	500.00
14	Taxidermist Licenses	15.00	210.00
3,184	Beaver Tags .....	.50	1,592.00
7	Game Raising Licenses	5.00	35.00
18	Seining Licenses	10.00	180.00
259	Beaver Permits	10.00	2,590.00
181	Trappers' Licenses	10.00	1,810.00
1	Alien Gun License	25.00	25.00
2	Scientific Permits	5.00	10.00
Total			\$ 7,495.00
			\$149,361.50

Licenses, Permits and Tags Issued from May 1, 1924 to Jan. 1, 1925.

56,113	Resident Citizen	@ \$ 2.00	\$112,226.00
2,046	Non-Resident Citizen Fishing	3.50	7,161.00
74	General Non-Resident Citizen	30.00	2,220.00
50	Limited Non-Resident Citizen	10.00	500.00
287	Alien Fishing	10.00	2,870.00
2	General Alien	50.00	100.00
			\$125,077.00
826	Shippings Permits	@ .50	413.00
40	Guides' Licenses	10.00	400.00
14	Taxidermist Licenses	15.00	210.00
2,339	Beaver Tags .....	.50	1,169.50
2	Game Raising Licenses	5.00	10.00
6	Seining Licenses	10.00	60.00
139	Beaver Permits	10.00	1,390.00
106	Trappers' Licenses	10.00	1,060.00
1	Alien Gun License	25.00	25.00
			\$ 4,737.50
Total			\$129,814.50

NOTE: Report for the Season of 1924 is not complete for the reason that the fiscal year does not end until April 30, 1925.

Statement of Receipts—All Sources.

	Fish & Game Fund	Predatory Animal Fund
Jan. 1, 1923-May 1, 1923	\$ 23,715.57	\$ 1,810.00
May 1, 1923-May 1, 1924	151,762.06	16,749.03
May 1, 1924-Jan. 1, 1925	135,014.58	14,970.94

Statement of Disbursements.

	Fish & Game Fund Salaries	Predatory Animal Fund Salaries	Fish & Game Fund Expenses	Predatory Animal Fund Expenses
Jan. 1, 1923-May 1, 1923	\$19,061.68	\$ 5,166.67	\$25,407.29	\$ 74.66
May 1, 1923-May 1, 1924	68,211.77	13,833.55	63,131.63	474.95
May 1, 1924-Jan. 1, 1925	52,872.51	10,156.66	50,392.05	144.20

**Fish & Game Fund "Salaries" includes salaries paid to all Game Wardens, Hatchery employees and the office employees at Helena.

**Predatory Animal Fund "Salaries" are salaries paid to State Trappers.

**Fish & Game Fund "Expenses" includes expenses of all Game Wardens, Hatchery employees, the office at Helena, and all capital investments, repairs and replacements.

**Predatory Animal Fund "Expenses" includes expenses of State Trappers.

Our Ranch Folks



TAKEN as a whole our Western country people are about the best people on earth. As sportsmen it is our duty to so conduct ourselves, when out hunting and fishing and when we meet these country people in town, as to merit their friendship and confidence. We owe them a big debt for letting us hunt and fish on their premises and the least we can do for these good people is to treat these privileges as real favors.

Close their gates; be careful where you shoot; ask their permission before hunting or fishing in their fields; don't tear down their fences, or do any other wrong act. If you never go back, some brother sportsman will. Respect the ranchman's rights and your sport will be increased and your conscience will feel easier.

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One of the "Kids"

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